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## FEDERAL PAGE

## The 'Surge' in Secrecy

22 Million Items Were Added to the Classified List Last Year

Associated Press

The volume of secret U.S. government documents, estimated in the hundreds of millions, grew last year by more than 22 million items, according to an annual federal report.

The growth far outpaced the number of secret documents that were declassified last year—about 8.1 million, a sharp decline from previous years, the Information Security Oversight Office said in its recently released annual report.

"We're not seeing declassifications in sufficient numbers to make up for the increase," said Steven Garfinkel, director of the oversight office. "The buildup in the military program has led to a tremendous surge in derivative classifications. There also has been a tremendous increase at the CIA."

Overall, the federal government generated 22.3 million secret documents in fiscal 1985, a 14 percent jump over fiscal 1984, the report said.

While acknowledging that there is no reliable figure on the total of the government's secret documents, Garfinkel estimated it to be in the hundreds of millions.

He said the government is releasing old secret papers at a slower pace than in previous years because

of a cutback in spending for declassification programs and the end of a period when World War II documents could be released in bulk.

Despite the trend toward more secret documents, Garfinkel praised the government's handling

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— Steven Garfinkel, oversight director

of national security information and discounted the possibility that President Reagan's 1982 executive order on classifying documents had contributed to the increase.

Reagan's executive order dropped requirements set by President Jimmy Carter that govern-

ment secrecy must be balanced against the public's right to know and that possible damage to the national security must be "identifiable" before a document could be classified.

In the three years since that order, the number of classification rulings has risen from 17.5 million to 22.3 million, or nearly a one-fourth increase. But Garfinkel said that he has noticed little difference in the type of documents being classified.

Instead, he traced the trend to Reagan's military buildup, which has generated more documents that must be stamped secret, especially the so-called "derivative classifications," in which material already marked secret must be classified every time it is included in a new document.

The report noted that the number of original classifications, or new secrets, actually decreased by 5.8 percent compared with 1984, falling to 830,641, the lowest number since the oversight office began collecting these statistics in 1979.

The report also said that government officials increasingly are marking documents "top secret" or "secret," rather than the lowest level of classification, which is "confidential." The higher classification reduces the distribution of documents within the government.

## Fielding: Call Him Partner

Former White House counsel Fred F. Fielding, 47, will become a partner in the 60-lawyer Washington firm of Wiley & Rein, according to sources close to Fielding.

firm specializes in communications law.

Fielding was en route to Australia yesterday as presidential envoy to a celebration of Australian-American Friendship Week, and could not

